

Wausau Riverfront Planning

Presented at the
2nd Wisconsin River Water Quality Improvement Symposium

March 29, 2012

Brad Lenz, AICP
City of Wausau





Early Planning

River Edge Commission – Established in 1974

- “The Common Council finds the river to be a natural resource of great value, present and future, to the City and its citizens.”
- Study the river and develop proposals, plans and recommendations for the river

Comprehensive Park and Recreation Plan (1990)

- Trail system plus public green space
- “...Maintain the surface water quality by keeping the banks in a vegetated, park land condition.”

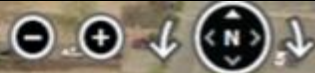
River Edge Master Plan (1995)

- Protect and enhance the scenic beauty of the river corridor
- Outline activities, programs and projects that improve the public’s ability to enjoy this resource





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100 feet 25 m

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500 feet 100 m

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Bridge St



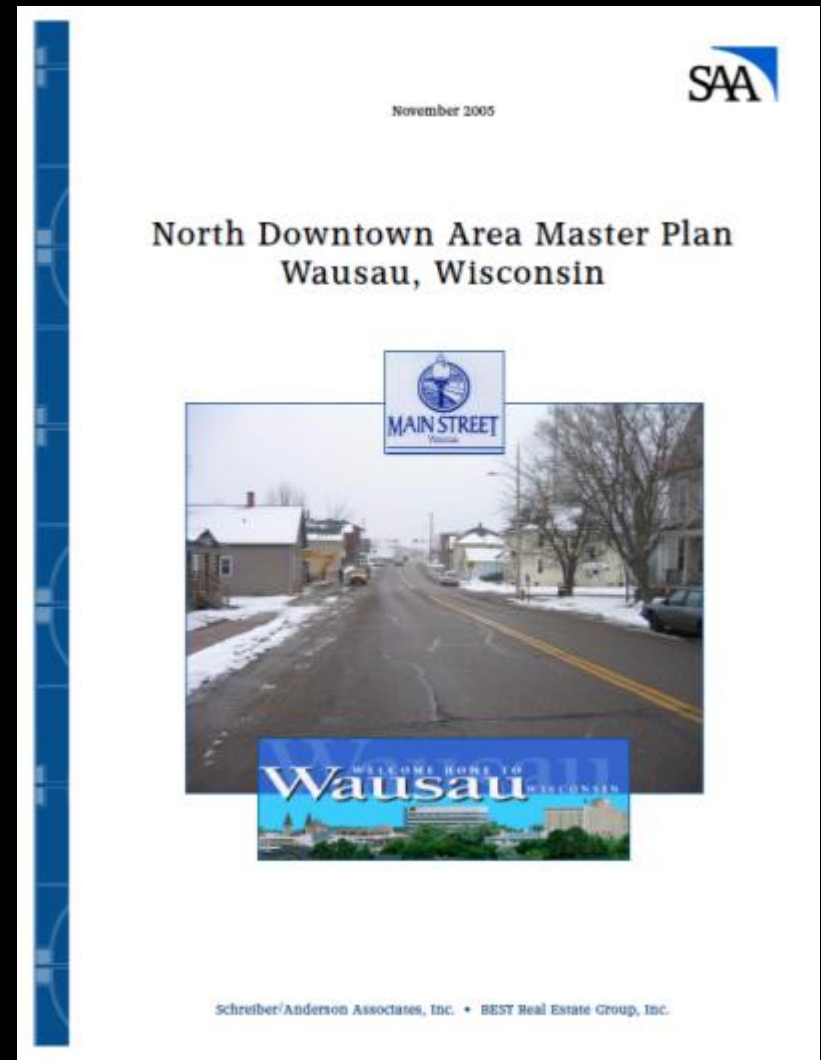
N 1st St

Fulton St

McIndoe St

North Downtown Area Master Plan (2005)

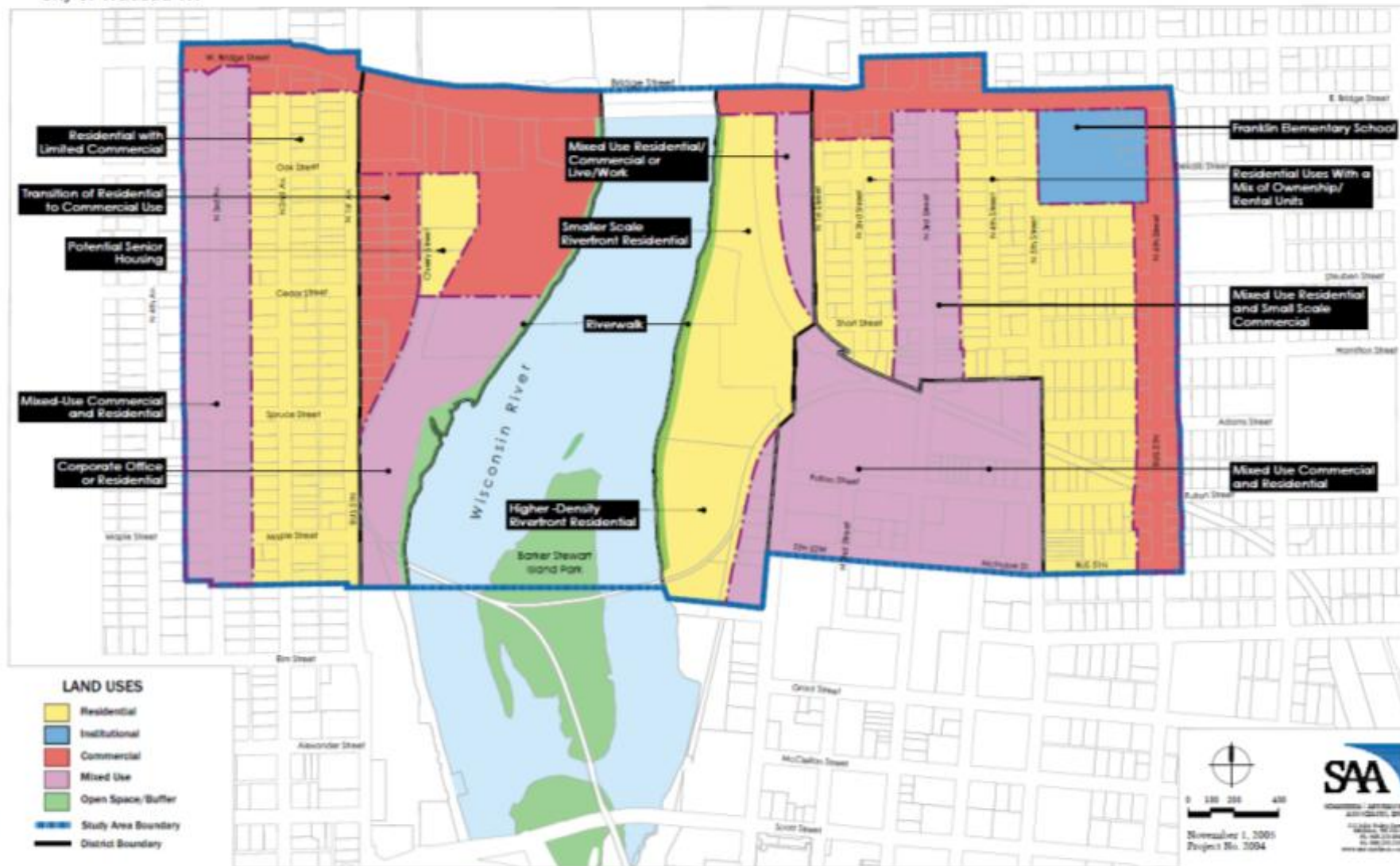
- Identifies “East Riverfront District”
- Market Recommendations
- Land Use Planning
 - Land Use Recommendations
 - Transportation Recommendations
 - Private Design Guidelines
 - Public Streetscape Guidelines



North Downtown Area Master Plan

City of Wausau WI

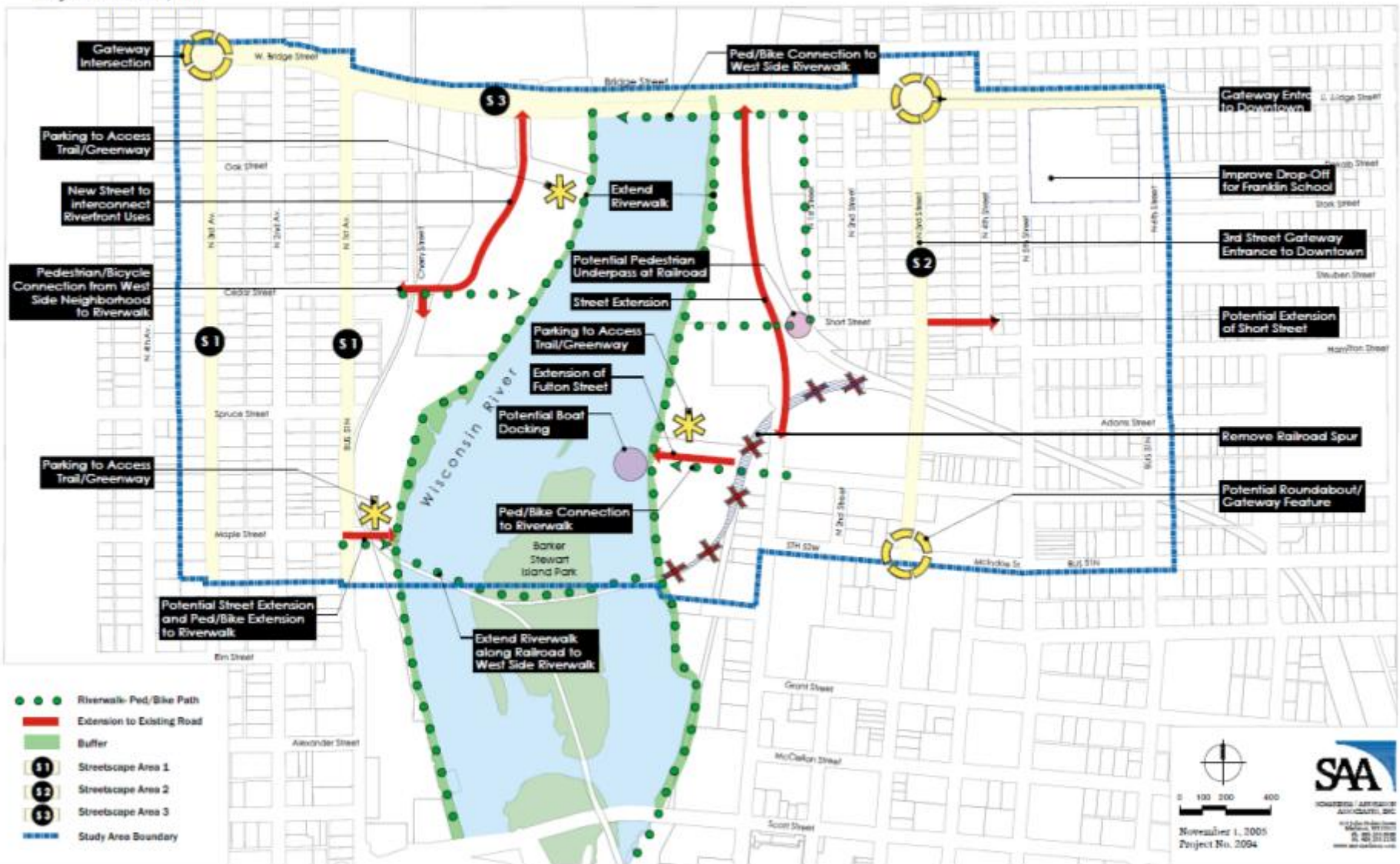
MAP 3: LAND USE



North Downtown Area Master Plan

City of Wausau, WI

MAP 5: TRANSPORTATION AND STREETScape



Wausau East Riverfront Master Plan: Reconciling the River and the City

Community Design Solutions
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee



Wausau Riverfront Redevelopment Project

Community Design Charrette
June 29, 2011

Dudley Tower - Wausau, Wisconsin
Summary by Payman Sadeghi

GROUP 3

The group focused on short-term objectives in order to, ultimately, attain long term goals. Beneath are the main discussed themes in the order of their importance:

1- Connectivity

- a) Pedestrian/car access from the Bridge Street. into the riverfront
- b) Pedestrian access from the residential development near Bridge St. toward the riverfront
- c) Increase visual connection by demolishing certain buildings on 1st Street
- d) Boat/Kayak access to the riverfront through boat dock

2- Land Use

- e) Keep the natural look of riverfront
- f) Design the walking trail near the riverfront
- g) Community garden in the narrow northern portion of the site
- h) Consider the floodplain zone
- i) Boat landing

3- Activity

- j) Passive activities like bird watching, sitting areas...
- k) Water fall features
- l) Water activities like boat riding

4- Sustainability

- m) Habitat restoration of bats living in the site

5- Identity

- n) Appreciate the historic industrial background of the City
- o) A green space as opposed to a modern hard surfaced area





Here the site map is zoomed in to describe the major elements.

PRIMARY DESIGN CONCEPTS

Promenade

Cutting through the site from east to west to introduce a multi-use space which will provide a strong visual and physical connection from the downtown area to the Wisconsin River.

Adaptive Reuse

A cluster of existing buildings in the center of the site can be re-used. Their foundations can remain for new construction, while existing cladding would be recycled throughout the site for constructing benches, planters, lighting and signage.

Natural Landscape

Maintain as much of the existing tree canopies as possible to avoid interfering with or significantly altering existing habitats. Existing open areas are also important to retain with grass replacing gravel and dirt.

Creek

The current culvert should be opened up and converted back to the creek which once existed within the site. This will allow the water from the river to penetrate within the site for better accessibility.

New Construction

Sustainably designed residential and retail buildings would line the promenade. The lineal orientation also promotes connection to the downtown area and adjacent parking.

Pathways

Various materials for pathways add variety and sustainable options, while allowing visitors to connect closer to the river.



Promenade view looking northeast

As the promenade extends towards the river, the vegetation becomes less landscaped and more natural, providing a calming experience.

The terraced steps range from standard stairs lining the outer edges, switching to deeper steps used for planters and seating, and then ADA compliant ramps for handicap accessibility.

A central water feature is another element bringing the river into the site.



Promenade view looking north

As the promenade extends past the new construction, the bike path becomes integrated with the paving material, reinforcing the importance of the main axis through the site.

Native vegetation and trees are to be the primary plantings throughout the site.



Promenade and dock birdseye view looking southeast

The promenade opens up as it extends past the new construction and reaches over the river itself. The deck cantilevers over the river, to allow the visitor to have a unique and dynamic experience.

Below the cantilever is a floating dock for small fishing boats, pontoon boats and kayaks to tie up.

Beyond the promenade, views to the existing concrete slabs allow a location for other activities to occur that require a paved surface.



Bridge over reclaimed creek looking west

Another prominent feature within the site is the reclaimed creek. The creek will flow from the river, allowing novice kayakers easier access.

Adaptive reuse of the surrounding buildings can be connected by a series of walking paths which also extend over the creek, rise up over the bike path and cantilever over the river.

Strategic use of stairs to access the creek will also allow another level of experience with the water.



Along path looking north

Various scales were used to design the path system throughout the project site. This allows for different levels of intimacy and relationships with the river and the rest of the site. Here the main path to the north end of the site connects with the stairway that leads to the terraced roof.

The careful use of different paths within the site break up the large expanses of green space to give users a sense of boundary, ownership and identity during their visit to the park.

Wausau Riverfront Planning

<http://www.ci.wausau.wi.us/Departments/Planning/Plans.aspx>

Phone: 715-261-6760

Brad Lenz, AICP
City of Wausau